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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Ankara Urges US to Take Concrete Steps Against PKK - Sabah
US Supports Ecumenical Patriarchate - Milliyet
Iraqi Kurds Press for Kirkuk, Independence - Hurriyet
US Loses Its Most Loyal Ally: King Fahd Dies - Sabah
Rumsfeld: Iraq Pullout Will Not End Terror Attacks - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

Turkey Urges US to Close PKK Office in Kirkuk - Cumhuriyet
EU: Iraq Exports Terrorism - Cumhuriyet
US Presses Iraqis To Meet mid-August Deadline - Zaman
Burns Cancels Uzbekistan Visit Over Base Crisis - Zaman
Fahd Dies, Abdullah the New King - Zaman
Fahd Raised US-Saudi Ties to their Highest Level - Yeni
Safak
Fresh Nuclear Crisis With Iran - Radikal
Iran Agrees to Delay Nuclear Program for 2 Days - Yeni Safak
Garang's Death Shocks Sudan - Radikal
Garang Killed in Suspicious Helicopter Crash - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

DAS Bryza Visits Ankara: US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matt Bryza said in Ankara on Wednesday that Turkey, Iraq, and the United States will hold the second trilateral meeting on the PKK in Washington later this week to discuss possible steps to eliminate the PKK threat against Turkey from northern Iraq, papers report. Bryza told the press after meeting high-level officials at the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) yesterday that the opening of a PKK office in Kirkuk goes against US and Iraqi policies. 'We see the PKK and its political extensions as terror organizations. There is no place for the PKK in a free and united Iraq,' Bryza stressed. Ankara gave Bryza the message that Turkey expects concrete measures by the US against the PKK, "Sabah" claimed. "Hurriyet" notes that Bryza offered the Turks cooperation in law enforcement against the PKK, help in cutting the terror organization's financial resources in Europe, and closer monitoring of PKK militants. The Turkish Embassy in Baghdad asked both Iraqi and US officials to close the PKK office in Kirkuk, papers report. Meanwhile, "Vatan" claimed that the PKK and its front organizations have 16 offices in Kirkuk alone, and more in Mosul and Baghdad.

Spokesman Casey on the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Cyprus: 'We encourage the government of Turkey and all governments to provide the maximum opportunity for people to freely express their religious beliefs and opinions,' State Department acting spokesman Tom Casey responding to a question on the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul. State Minister Mehmet Ali Sahin had warned that the Government could initiate legal action against the Patriarch for 'going too far' in asking for 'privileges' for his community. 'We support the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul and talk with the Turkish Government on a regular basis about the Patriarchate. The United States is committed to religious freedom, not only in Turkey but around the world,' Casey said. Asked to comment on a Turkish declaration stressing non-recognition of Nicosia by Ankara, Casey said that the US policy is to seek a solution to the dispute on the island on the basis of the Annan plan. 'The Secretary General has spoken with the parties, and asked them to come up with ideas and suggestions on how to proceed. That's where we are, and that's where our focus is on Cyprus,' Casey noted.

Turkish Police Interrogate Terror Suspects at Abu Ghraib: A special Turkish police team interrogated Sadettin Aktas and Burhan Kus, suspected of involvement in the November 2003 terrorist bombings in Istanbul, at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad in the presence of US officials, papers report. The

two suspects were arrested in Iraq last month. Reports claim that Gurcan Bac, an explosives expert and the alleged number-two man in the plot, was killed by US troops in Iraq earlier this year. The whereabouts of another top militant, Abdulkadir Karakus, remain unclear. Reports say that US officials allowed the interrogation of Aktas and Kus because their extradition process is expected to take some time to be completed.

Ankara Awaits EU Reaction to Turkish Declaration on Cyprus: EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn said there are 'no obstacles' to the opening of EU entry talks with Turkey on October 3 now that Ankara has expanded its customs union agreement with the EU by signing a protocol to cover the newest members of the bloc, including Cyprus. Rehn said accession talks with Turkey would begin on October 3 as planned. He noted that Ankara's declaration of continued non-recognition of the Greek Cypriot administration by Turkey would be examined by the EU. Rehn stressed that the declaration 'does not appear to block implementation' of the protocol. Turkey is afraid that the EU may release a document to counter Ankara's declaration, and that Turkey's opponents may press for adding new conditions to the negotiations framework document, including access to Turkish ports and airports by the Greek Cypriots. Cyprus, Greece, France, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg are reportedly unhappy with the Turkish declaration. Papers also note that the declaration released by Ankara has not been officially accepted by the EU.

High Military Council (YAS) Convenes: Turkey's High Military Council (YAS) convened on Monday to discuss promotions and expulsions in the military, papers report. Dailies estimate that up to 10 officers could be dismissed for involvement in radical religious activities. Dailies expect Prime Minister Erdogan to note his objection to the expulsions, as he has in past years. Papers also expect the YAS to discuss tougher measures to prevent corruption in military.

Leftist Terror Organization Plans Attack Against BTC Pipeline: Turkish police have reportedly uncovered a terrorist organization's plans to carry out an attack against the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline. The discovery was made during an investigation of Eyup Beyaz, a member of the outlawed radical leftist DHKP-C (Dev-Sol) group, who attempted to carry out a suicide bombing in Ankara last month. Beyaz was killed by police before he could detonate his bomb. Security measures along the pipeline have been enhanced, officials said.

Karamanlis Postpones Turkey Visit: Greek Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis has postponed a trip to Turkey scheduled for August, international wire services report. 'PM Karamanlis will visit Turkey later in the autumn,' a Greek official said. Greek officials did not elaborate on why the trip, which would have been the first official visit by a Greek PM to Turkey in over 46 years, had been postponed.

Iraqi Turkmen Demand Constitutional Rights: Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) Ankara representative Ahmet Muratli told "Yeni Safak" that the Turkmen will boycott the new Iraqi constitution if their language is not recognized in the constitution draft. Muratli said the Turkmen want to be recognized as one of the constituent peoples of Iraq, and be granted the right to self-determination. Muratli noted that the PKK has entered the political process in Iraq, and recalled that PKK-affiliated parties had entered the January general elections. 'PKK members continue coming to Kirkuk. In the future, they may demand land from the Turkmen. The US must solve this problem,' Muratli said. Muratli claimed that the PKK is being supported by the KDP and PUK.

European Parliament to Hold Kurdish Conference: A group of leftist parliamentarians in the European Parliament plans to host a conference on 'the EU, Turkey, and the Kurds' in Brussels September 19-20, "Cumhuriyet" reports. European Parliament Speaker Joseph Borrell and EU Expansion Commissioner Olli Rehn will participate in the conference, as will former DEP lawmakers Leyla Zana and Hatip Dicle, Peter Galbraith (described as an American "expert" on the Kurdish question), the wife of former French President Francois Mitterrand, author Orhan Pamuk, Human Rights Association (IHD) Chairman Yusuf Alatas, and Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir.

PKK Releases Abducted Mayor: The PKK has released Hasim Akyurek, mayor of Yaylidere in Turkey's eastern province of Bingol, whom the Kurdish militants abducted last week. Akyurek, a member of Turkey's ruling AK Party, said his captors had treated him well. 'The PKK militants told me they had observed a ceasefire with Turkey for seven years, but could find nobody in the government to speak with them,' Akyurek said following his release. PKK militants also told Akyurek that they planned to release a Turkish soldier they abducted last month.

IBDA-C Launches Magazine In Support of Al-Qaida: "Aksam" and "Cumhuriyet" report on a new magazine, "Kaide," that is being published by the radical Islamist group IBDA-C (Islamic Great Eastern Raiders) in support of Al-Qaida. The magazine reportedly hit the newsstands July 28, and 10,000 copies have been printed. Commentaries in the magazine are 'chilling,' according to "Aksam." An article entitled "El-Kaide is Liberating the World" covers a full two pages in the magazine's first issue. Attacks in which women and children died are being described as "actions in which 35 Jews were among the dead." The founders of the magazine say they support the idea of El-Kaide 'as a concept.'

NGO Head Fined for Using Kurdish Name: "Hurriyet" reports that Ridvan Kizgin, provincial head of the Human Rights Association (IHD) in the mainly Kurdish city of Bingol, was fined 1,120 YTL for using the city's former Kurdish name in a letter to the governor's office. Kizgin has appealed the decision, and seeking to have the fine canceled.

Kurdish Language Schools Close Doors: Kurdish language schools in Istanbul, Diyarbakyr, Van, Kyzyltepe, Adana, Sanlyurfa, Batman and Dogubeyazyt have closed due to lack of interest, "Cumhuriyet" reports. School administrators said in a statement that the Kurds in Turkey were not interested in going to language schools, but would like to receive public education in Kurdish.

EDITORIAL OPINION: King Fahd; Uzbekistan

"Death of the King"
Nuh Gonultas wrote in the conservative-sensational "DB Tercuman" (8/2): "The Saudi royal family is facing a tough period following the death of King Fahd. The events of September 11 marked a new beginning for Saudi Arabia, which faced a debate over the legitimacy of the Saudi regime and its relationship with the US. King Fahd used to support the US at all costs. But the new ruler, King Abdullah, is known for his stance against the Bush administration's foreign policy, especially its Iraq policy. There is also an unsettled issue over oil prices between Riyadh and Washington, with Saudi Arabia remaining the largest oil producer in OPEC. American financial circles are worried about the continuing decrease in Saudi investment in the US because of anti-Americanism that began following 9/11. Saudi Arabia is facing difficult times ahead in its relations with the US, because Riyadh is not acting enthusiastically in the war on terrorism."

"The King Died, Long Live the New King"
Erdal Safak commented in the mass appeal "Sabah" (8/2): "Saudi King Fahd died and crown prince Abdullah, his 82-year-old half brother, was appointed as the new monarch. This means that the old generation will continue to rule the country for a while longer. They are old, conservative, and against all kinds of social reform. King Abdullah, who has been the de facto ruler for the last ten years, is exerting great efforts to save the regime. In order to ease tension in the country, he opened the way for some new steps, including a discussion about women's rights and holding elections for local administrations. But Abdullah has continued to jail people who act against his wishes. Will these few, limited measures be sufficient to save the kingdom? Unless certain reforms are implemented in the education system, King Abdullah and his dynasty cannot have peace, and the war against bin-Laden cannot be won. The regime in Saudi Arabia will have a hard time until a younger and more liberal administration replaces the current one. Of course, that is, if the regime can survive until then."

"Kerimov vs. Bush"
Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative-mass appeal "Turkiye" (8/2): "Uzbekistan President Kerimov has taken a stand against George Bush, asking Washington to close down its bases in the country. Kerimov's move is not a surprise, and is related to recent events in the former Soviet republics. The democracy movement in Andijon started as a riot, in which the US was believed to have played a strong role. But the events in Andijon did not end as they did in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine. Moreover Washington has accused Tashkent of opening fire against civilians. The response from Kerimov came swiftly. Kerimov is clearly telling Washington that 'Uzbekistan is my business. Keep your nose out of it.' So he set a deadline for the US to evacuate the American airbase there within 6 months. Kerimov seems unaware that the Soviet era is over. In today's world, everybody interferes in everyone else's business."

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